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Inside Story Of Left Wing Groups Told

SANTA MONICA, Calif.

What started with a newspaperman being "planted" to report on left-wing organizations emerged as a 12-part series with thousands of reprints of a 16-page tabloid mailed all over the country.

Ron Funk, managing editor of the *Santa Monica Evening Outlook*, has publicized the disclosures as a public service. The stories were written by staff writer Jerry LeBlanc, who was "fired" last July and then returned to the staff after the stories were published.

Mr. Funk's decision to assign a reporter followed his suspicion that there wasn't anything "grass roots" about the leadership of such organizations as the W.E.B. DuBois Clubs and the Committee to End the War in Viet Nam. He was more positive last summer when an "Artists Protest Committee" from the San Fernando Valley picketed Rand Corp., the Air Force "think factory" in Santa Monica, and the same leaders of the DuBois Clubs and Students for a Democratic Society showed up as demonstration monitors.

Volunteer Is 'Fired'

Mr. LeBlanc volunteered. So he was "fired." The staff was told he was leaving, and no one but Mr. Funk knew that the reporter was to telephone him at home daily, facetiously using the code identification of "007." He had no trouble becoming a member of the DuBois Club and other protest groups. He carried painted signs, wrote propaganda and was able to travel freely in the guise of an "unemployed writer."

He climbed up to committee positions, including membership in the "Congress of Unrepresented People." His wife, Renee, accompanied him to some of the meetings. He had his moments of worry about his safety and Mr. Funk said that no matter how well Jerry's professional training screened him from emotional involvement in his experience, there were emotional shocks—as when he heard an appeal for enlistments to fight Americans in South Viet Nam. Another came when he heard a leader describe his connections with Moscow.

It was a coincidence that his material was being collected when the Watts riots erupted last August and he was forced

to take part as a picket against Police Chief William Parker.

After two months, Mr. LeBlanc was pulled back to write the series. Attorneys were used for checks on libel.

The reporter wrote that he "joined their organizations, their picket lines, strategy sessions, coffee discussions, public forums, parties and endless committee meetings . . . on every soapbox and even door to door . . ." This is the world of the Extreme Left, he added, and "I joined these revolutionaries because today more than ever they are making news, and news is the business of a reporter . . . I went in blindly, objectively, not knowing who I'd meet or what I'd find."

The *Santa Ana* (Calif.) *Register* and the *West Covina* (Calif.) *San Gabriel Valley Daily Tribune* were the first to accept offers to reprint the series and distribute the tabloid reprints to readers in those areas.

One typical response was an order for 1000 reprints from Parker Aircraft Co. in Los Angeles. Mayor Sam Yorty of Los Angeles ordered 200 copies and Supervisor Burton Chace asked for 50. Copies were sent by the Outlook to every member of the California Legislature and the California delegation to Congress.